



## Prayer Series

### Part 5

January 30, 2022

### Praying Through Difficulty

Matthew 26:36-46, “<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.”<sup>37</sup> And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. <sup>38</sup>Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.” <sup>39</sup> And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as

you will.”<sup>40</sup> And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour?”<sup>41</sup> Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”<sup>42</sup> Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.”<sup>43</sup> And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.<sup>44</sup> So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again.<sup>45</sup> Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Sleep and take your rest later on.<sup>[e]</sup> See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.<sup>46</sup> Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

May the Lord add His blessing to the reading and the hearing of His Word; Amen. In this passage of Scripture, we are allowed an amazing opportunity to see into the pain and the passion of the Messiah as He had to personally navigate the struggle of remaining faithful to the will of God; even when the will of God was frightful and riven with pain. Regrettably, it has been taught that when we are in the will of God that everything will be great and the sign that we are outside of the will of God is when things are bad. This is simply not true. There are times when the will of God is easy and other times when the will of God is hard! And when it is hard is when we have to be willing to endure some stuff.

Jesus endured some difficulty. Jesus endured Pain and Trial and Difficulty and Betrayal and if we are truly desirous to strive to be like Christ then we must understand that building our faith, developing our prayer life, and being discipled into the doctrines and teachings of Christ is a painful process that requires far more than what many are willing to devote to or follow through with.

And with that said, Point #1...

## 1. A Powerful and Effective Prayer Life is often Birthed during the most Painful Seasons of our Lives!

- a. Notice with me verses 37-39 in our passage of text that we read earlier... Verses 37-39, <sup>37</sup> "And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. <sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." <sup>39</sup> And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."
- b. In this passage of text, we see that the Will of God can be just as Painful as the Prayer in preparation to be faithful to the Will of God; there are many who desire the power and impact of prayer but few are willing to endure the pain and problems that generate a powerful prayer life.

- c. Like so many of you, my prayer life is valuable to me because my prayers were, and often still are, birthed out of Sacrifice and Sacrifice is Painful! I've had to pray through my fears, pray through my doubts, pray through my questions, pray through my mistakes, pray through my tears, pray through my brokenness, through my loss, through my grief, pray, pray through my circumstances, pray through my pain, pray through the accusations, through the rumors, through the gossip, through the backbiting, pray through the pain of betrayal, pray through false brethren. Church family, any person of solid faith and consistent prayer had to pay a great price to have it and at times an even higher price to keep it.
- d. And the same can be found to be true for many of you! No one knows the true cost of what you had to endure to simply have the courage to pray because no one knows the true story of the pain that you had to endure to keep your faith.
- e. And for many of us, the fact that we still have the faith enough to pray is a miracle in and of itself... But, though prayer may be birthed out of painful seasons, there is a miracle that is found in prayer... Point #2



## 2. A Powerful and Effective Prayer Life is often the miracle in and of itself!

- a. Observe with me verses 40-43... <sup>40</sup> And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour? <sup>41</sup> Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” <sup>42</sup> Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.” <sup>43</sup> And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.
- b. Sometimes the Greatest Miracle of Prayer is still having the tenacity to pray when no one is aware of the struggle you had to endure to keep enough faith to pray.
- c. And for others, the cost you had to pay to keep pushing forward and not give up praying for that lost loved one when it seems that there is no light at the end of the tunnel.
- d. Notice how Jesus keeps returning and finding his disciples asleep rather than prayerful; but even through the frustration of their sleeping state, Jesus did not allow the posture of prayer of others to affect the fervency of His own prayers. He did not allow the actions of others to forfeit His own.

- e. Isn't it interesting that in this passage of text, it is recorded that Jesus pled with the Father three times with the following statement in verse 39, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." And then again in verse 42, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."
- f. And it is recorded that Jesus went a third time and repeated the same prayer, "So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again."
- g. Though there is a miracle found in prayer, there is a power found in prayer that is often overlooked ... Point #3

### 3. The Power of Prayer is often not found in Christ changing our situation but rather, through our situation, His Grace enables us to endure!

- a. This is extremely unique to another conversation in prayer recorded in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 which is a dialogue that the Apostle Paul recorded... "So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. <sup>8</sup>Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. <sup>9</sup>But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect

in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.<sup>10</sup> For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- b. Notice in verse 9, <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Say it with me, “His grace is sufficient for me!”
- c. Check it out with this passage of text in mind! In the Gospel of Saint Matthew chapter 26, it is recorded that Jesus, the Son, is asking for the Father, the everlasting to everlasting, to take the cup away and let it pass of him. In 2 Corinthians chapter 12, we have the Apostle Paul asking the Son, Jesus, to take this thorn away from him.
- d. Between these two passages of text, we have the Father unveiling His Grace to be sufficient for the Son to endure the Cross. We then have the Son unveiling His Grace to be sufficient for the Apostle Paul to endure his thorn in the flesh. Jesus understood the Grace that enabled Him to be victorious and obedient to the will of God. Paul understood the Grace that enabled him to be victorious and obedient to endure the thorn in his flesh.

- e. The Father unveiled to the Son the same Grace that the Son unveiled to Paul; I want you to remember the words of Christ found in the **Gospel of Saint John 5:19-20**, “<sup>19</sup> So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. <sup>20</sup> For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel.”
- f. And today the same Father who gave Christ the Grace to endure and the same Christ who gave Paul the Grace to endure is the same God who is giving you the Grace to endure every season and every difficulty because, Church Family, His Grace is Sufficient!